

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): A plastic substrate for use in optical instruments, ~~wherein the plastic substrate comprises comprising:~~

a composite substrate in which fibers are embedded in a resin matrix, the fibers being arranged ~~to extend in at least one predetermined direction~~ ~~two nearly orthogonal directions~~ within a plane of the composite substrate, ~~and; wherein~~

~~wherein the composite substrate substantially transmits visible radiation and has a predefined retardation that is associated with the predetermined direction in which the fibers are arranged~~ an in-plane retardation of substantially zero.

Claims 2-4 (canceled).

Claim 5 (currently amended): The plastic substrate of claim 31, wherein the composite substrate has negative uniaxial anisotropy.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The plastic substrate of claim 1, wherein the composite substrate functions as a quarter-wave plate.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The plastic substrate of claim 1, wherein the fibers are embedded in the resin matrix as a bundle of fibers, a woven fabric or a nonwoven fabric.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The plastic substrate of claim 1, further comprising a protective coating on at least one principal surface of the composite

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substrate.

Claim 9 (previously presented): A liquid crystal display device comprising the plastic substrate of claim 1 and a liquid crystal layer.

Claim 10 (original): The liquid crystal display device of claim 9, further comprising a polarizer, which is arranged such that the absorption axis of the polarizer is either substantially parallel or substantially perpendicular to the at least one predetermined direction in which the fibers are arranged.